

**MA ANANDAMAYEE**  
**AMRIT VARTA**

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Shree Anandamayee Ma

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## MATRI - VANI

Q. Will God manifest Himself in Samyam Saptah or will He not?

Ma - Sure He will; the curtain will be removed-He Himself who is ever manifest. The work of removing the curtain is yours. Therefore do auspicious deeds. The question of what happens or what does not happen, when manifestation takes place, does not remain.

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In every place everything is present. As in a tree, there is seed in the tree. Unlimited seeds are present, unlimited ways. Tree non-tree. Tree in the form of seed and seed in tree. In you alone are the father, husband and son. All things are present in the form of numbers.

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Q. : Due to the meritorious deeds of so many births human body is given, then why does he commit sin?

Ma : Why does he forget that he has come due to the result of so much piety (in past lives)? He has got into the habit. The practice remains. He has got this life for doing (good) deeds This life is God's beautiful feat of performance. There are so many bad deeds and good deeds. The manner of doing good deed is different. The sin of so many births will be destroyed. In between if any wrong deed is done again he goes into the life of trees, birds, animals. Human life is very rare. On receiving this life it is (one's) duty to take God's beautiful way. For knowing the Self in oneself.

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He is indestructible. He is unchangeable, not the one who comes and goes. One who is in the state of going and coming, that is a different matter. He is in a *yuga* (a long period of years) like a tree, innumerable seeds, innumerable destinations, innumerable states, in this way All in All. One without a second. (*Eka Brahma dvitiiyo nasthi*) Motion in rest (*sthiti*) a bird is flying away; sometimes he sits on a tree; if he gets shelter then he sits. If the *atma* which is in a state of movement stops (rests), if he finds a special place that too according to his state, how does he stay? Some can perceive. Movement is within. Still he remains in the mental state. Even in this mental state everything is in it. One without a second. In that state there is no question. That kind of state, *Puja*. If he stays in the mental state (then) he will be able to see what his ability enlightens. Some or the other higher being sees.

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Pure actions, good actions should be done immediately; one cannot trust one's next breath; good actions, pure actions should be done now. This is a true saying, do not delay (doing) auspicious *karma*.

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Our work is accomplished by taking (His) Name. If you take God's name your work (aim, desire) will be fulfilled. Guru will come on his own.

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In this world whatever is made is destroyed. Happiness, unhappiness, good and negative actions, light and darkness. Worry remains, not worryless. Your deeds remain. Something breaks, you feel sad. The erosion that takes place due to duality, that is unhappiness.

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This, the worldly thing, worldly talk. He has been in worldliness. Whatever he does it will give him nothing else but unhappiness only. (This is) the natural world. And its nature is conflict, dispute.

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God's manifestation is a Natural Manifestation. Natural Manifestation and false manifestation. (They) get caught in false manifestation. In achieving *siddhi* (esoteric power) like verbal *siddhi* - whatever one says it happens. If one does not rise above it, one says this — it happens, one says that — it happens. (Ma says one should not get caught in it. In Ma's words) Onself to organise oneself.

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(In the path of spiritual practise) It is natural to come in this path (i.e. *siddhi*) To be able to predict the future etc. will definitely come. The waking of false manifestation. Manifestation has come alive. It is also being used. When (a *sadhaka*) begins to make use of his powers then he remains static. That journey of Bliss, Supreme Bliss stops. Gets caught within want. Kept standing until manifestation (of powers) takes place; as soon as it takes place (the *sadhaka*) stops there, lizard like.

# SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANG

Vol. 5

—Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

Translation - Br. Niranjani

(continued)

**22.10.1948 Friday**

I left for Kashi by Varanasi Express with wife and both the daughters. Manomohan and his son Sriman Shakti also accompaneid us. We had reserved our seats in the sleeper so we did not have to run around for our seats.

Today morning itself Mataji reached Kolkata from Beldanga and went to Sri Trigunacharan Bandopadhyaya's house in Srirampur. She will board the train from here. At Srirampur Ma boarded the same train as ours. Many devotees have come to Kolkata from Srirampur, all of them came to the station. As soon as Mataji boarded the train Manomohan and myself did *pranam* to Ma. Ma laughed out loudly. Khukuni didi remarked 'Ma, after all you are taking Amulya dada to Kashi?' Mataji said, "Absolutely, after fixing the day and date." The train started.

**Do those dependent on Sadguru get *mukti* after three lives or not —**

This was the first time in my life that I got a chance to travel with Ma in this manner. Who knows whether I will be fortunate to get a chance to stay with Ma for such a long time ever agin Discussion on many topics began. I asked Mataji, "Ma, I have heard if a Sadguru gives *diksha* then, there and then the *sanchita karma* (stored *karma* of the past) is destroyed but the *prarabdha karma* (that *karma* which is incumbent and bound to be gone through) has to be undergone. But the Guru can diminish its intensity. The new *karma* of the *shishya* that is *kriyanana karma* is suffered by the Guru himself. If this is true, then why does the blessed disciple of the Sadguru have to take birth thrice to be able to get salvation (*mukti*)?"

Mataji - Some say that those dependent on Sadguru have to take three lives (births) to attain *mukti*, then some say it can take ten lives (births) also.

I- After taking *diksha* (initiation from Sadguru) what happens to the disciple's *karma* thereafter? Does the Guru have to undergo the fruits of his *karma*?

Mataji started laughing without replying.

I- You had said in Kolkata that those *karmas* (actions) are due to *bhog* (conse-

quences of the past deeds) which one desires to do, feels good while doing and feels like repeating again and again.

Mataji—The same I say even now. *Karmas* are of two kinds *karmayoga* and *karmabhoga*. *Karmayoga* is that *karma* which is done for God without the desire of fruits of labour and those *karmas* which only create desires we can call them *karmabhoga*.

I—Does the Guru suffer the fruits of the *karmas* done by his disciple, after initiation, to fulfill his desires? Sri Vijayakrishna Goswami has said those dependent on a Sadguru have no new *karma*. The Guru makes the *shishya* (disciple) his own that is takes full responsibility of the *shishya* after initiating him. Actually the Guru himself does the *sadhana* done by the *shishya* in his body and you too have said similar things. Once you had told me that even if a dependent *shishya* does bad deeds yet, know that his uplift is taking place. From this it is evident that he does not do any new *karma*.

Mataji—If in reality one gets Sadguru's shelter under such circumstances there is no question. He can give salvation (*mukti*) in a moment. He himself gets the desires of his *shishya* fulfilled. You all too must have heard of such things that the Guru himself took the *shishya* to places of fulfillment of desires and facilitated it and after seeing the signs of erosion of *karma*, he took him to another place. One who can finish the fruits of all *karma*, can he not finish the fruits of *prarabdha karma*? It is only due to the Guru's wish that the *shishya* takes more births to finish the fruits of his *karma*, some say three lives, then some say ten lives.

"The Guru himself takes the *shishya's* fruits of *karma* or distributes them among others or removes the *karma* without the undergoing of their fruits, all this is done in various *bhavas*, this in turn is the result of difference in spiritual levels. During *sadhana* all such *bhavas* come when one feels that perhaps this is the actual truth. The intensity of the *bhava* is so great that it cannot be kept hidden, as if splashing and flowing. But if the *sadhaka* on reaching this state keeps the goal in his mind and does not react, then he reaches a higher state and only then he realises the real meaning of the previous *bhava*. While doing *sadhana* someone comes to know that you were his brother in the previous life; he tells you the same. Within you, you have all other relationships of the past, there must have been thousands of brothers in so many lives, besides there must have been so many other relationships with so many people. But he did not experience all this. He only accepted you wholly as his brother of the previous life. The experience of the field of *sadhana* is also similar. A *sadhaka* many times takes a part truth as the whole truth. But if the *sadhaka* stays in surrender keeping his mind on the goal then one day he achieves the fullness of knowledge,

then nothing else remains to be known or understood."

I— If the dependent on Sadguru can take ten lives to attain *mukti* due to the Guru's will then it can take an unlimited number of years too.

Mataji—No. Why should this happen? Unlimited births are definitely there, but if once one gets His *kripa* then why should it take an unlimited number of years?

In this way discussing many topics we were travelling in the train. How the time flew we did not even come to know. The train was halting at several stations and the local devotees of each station were bringing flowers and fruits etc for Mataji and having Her *darshan*. The Post Master of Raniganj Surendra Bandopadhyaya had Mataji's *darshan* with his wife. As the time was too little everyone stood on the platform and received Ma's *darshan*. Mataji sprinkled water on them from the train itself. All took the water as *shantijal* and bowing received it on their heads. Similarly Mataji also gave fruits throwing them like balls. Devotees assembled in the same manner in Jasidih, Sitarampur and other stations. We too received the fruits, *sandesh* etc. as gifts for Mataji again and again. As night approached Mataji told us to prepare to retire. We too went to our respective reserved berths and slept.

(to be continued)

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### *Blessing for the New Year*

*"New Year ! New Life. Man should remember Truth in every moment and in every situation with a new zeal"*

— *Shree Shree Ma*



## MOTHER AND HER PLAYFUL ROLE

—Bhaiji

We have often heard from Mother that when She used to attend to Her household duties She was fully absorbed in the work and had not the slightest thought about Her dress, food or even Her body. She would devote Herself wholly to the tasks assigned to Her and carry out the orders of Her superiors in the family with scrupulous care. Her neighbours would always say.— "This newly married girl lacks usual common sense."

Mother says— "Just as there is a definite time-table for work at the office, school or the shop, so should we set apart for divine contemplation a few minutes out of the twenty-four hours of every day, preferably in the morning and evening. One must form a fixed resolve that this little time shall be dedicated to God throughout life. During this period no worldly activity should be allowed to encroach upon the contemplation of God. A fixed time must be allotted to all the members of the family including the servants. If this practice is continued for long, divine contemplation will become a part of your nature. Once the habit is established, the future course of your life will be made quite easy. You will feel the flow of the mysterious divine grace feeding all your thoughts and actions and giving you new strength. You get a pension or bonus after years of hard work, so that you need no longer earn your livelihood. In the spiritual realm the reward for good, sincere and selfless work is even far greater and can be obtained more easily.

"Your earthly pension expires with your life, but the Divine Pension continues long, long after death. Those who amass money, store it up in a hidden chamber of their house, add to this store what they can save from time to time and keep a constant watch over their treasure. So also reserve a little corner of your mind for God and always steal an opportunity to add to your stock in the shape of the invocation of His name or some pious work or divine thought."

One day Mother was showing the various ways of saluting God and said, — "Lose yourself altogether when bowing down to God with a single-minded devotion and you will obtain joy and power in proportion. If you cannot do anything else, at least morning and evening at the appointed time, lay down your body, mind and lie flat before Him in salutation and think of Him just a little." In this connection She added, "There are two kinds of *pranāms*\*: Offering to him, your whole body and mind with all thoughts, desires, sense-impressions, love, affection and devotion, just

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\*. Mode of salutation.

like emptying the contents of a full pitcher to its last drop. The other way is like scattering face-powder through the minute holes of a powder-box; the major portion of your thoughts and desires are kept back in a hidden chamber of your mind, and only a little dust is allowed to escape."

Pramatha Babu was transferred from Dhaka as Post Master General. He went to Mother to bid Her farewell. Mother said to him— "Who salutes whom? You bow down to your own Self." He was thrilled with wonder and joy to hear such a remark.

On one occasion Prof. Atal Behari Bhattacharji fell ill at Shah-bag during the Puja holidays. He keenly desired that Mother should come down to him, and like his own mother, massage his aching head. Mother went and passed Her hands over his whole body from head to foot. On recovery he returned to Rajshahi, the place of his work. After some days this incident was discussed at Shah-bag. I remarked,— "The gentleman lacked common sense, his intelligence was equally poor. I fail to see what purpose he had to make Mother do that job for him during his illness." As soon as Mother heard my remark, Her face changed colour. She said,— "Shall I massage your feet?" With these words She advanced towards me. I began to move away, with Mother following me. Pitaji intervened and stopped Her. Even now I remember Mother's childlike face glowing with motherly warmth, always eager to nurse, soothe and serve all Her children. At that moment Sri. Shashanka Mohan Mukherji cried out, "Ma, Ma," and fell at Her feet.

In this connection Mother said,— "Just as a human body has different parts like the head, the hands, thighs, feet, fingers and toes, I find all of you representing my various limbs. You all belong to one body,—each one has to do work of equal importance."

On a different occasion late Nirmal Chandra Chatterji of Benaras offered some flowers at Mother's feet. Just then a man was passing by, carrying flowers in a basket to perform the worship of his deity elsewhere. Mother picked up the flowers that had been presented at Her feet and placed them in the basket. Nirmal Babu enquired from Mother why She did so. Her reply was, "All people are worshipping One Being only; all hands and feet belong to One Body."

On another occasion, I observed Mother striking the ground with a bamboo chip when a fly was accidentally killed by a stroke. With great care and concern Mother picked it up and kept it in Her closed fist. Many persons were present. Four to five hours passed in conversation. Mother then opened Her fist and said to me, "Can you do anything for the good of this fly which has passed on to the other world?" I said, "I have heard people say there is heaven inside the body of man." So saying, I swallowed the fly.

Mother began to laugh and said,— "What have you done? Does not a man get ill

when he eats a fly?" I replied,— "If through your goodwill the fly meets with a better life, no harm will come to me." I did not get ill.

Referring to this incident Mother said, — "Insects, flies, spiders and men all belong to one family, — nobody knows what they were, are or will be and how they have become interrelated to one another."

I had a very pious Muslim friend, the late Moulvi Jainuddin Hossain. He used to pass nearly all his time in divine contemplation. One Thursday evening I went to Shahbag with him and Niranjan. *Kirtan* was in full swing in the *Nat-mandap*.<sup>\*</sup> We three stood at a distance under a tree so that we might not be seen from the place of the *kirtan*. After about half an hour we found to our surprise that Mother suddenly came out of the hall with Her devotees following Her with a lantern. With quick steps Mother came towards us, touched my friend with Her right hand and then walked on. We three followed Her footsteps. There was a very well preserved grave of a Muslim saint in a corner of Shah-bag. Mother went there and took up the postures usual to Muslims during their prayer, uttering at the same time all the particular words they use. My Muslim friend also joined Her. On returning from there the *kirtan* was resumed and my friend too sang with the party, clapped his hands with them and moved round and round. It so happened that the man in charge of the grave was absent that evening and did not light candles or offer sweets as usual.

(an excerpt from *Mother as Revealed to Me*)

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Man is born in order to experience the happiness and sorrow of this world. Those who have the good sense of wanting to go beyond happiness and pain must take their sole refuge in Him.

—Shree Shree Ma

<sup>\*</sup> An open hall meant for *kirtan* etc.

## PILGRIMAGE TO KAILAS

—Gurupriya Devi

(continued)

**Friday, 28 June**

We set out at nine a.m. and decided to halt at a place called 'Bodhi', seven miles away, for lunch. Today the path was slightly better than yesterday's but it was undoubtedly terrifying. Our legs seemed to be giving way but we had to keep on. There was no question of halting anywhere.

At certain spots we had to hold on to coolies and walk. *Dandis* could not be used and it was a feat in itself for the coolies to carry our *dandis* along that treacherous route. How terrible the path was! One feared to even tread along it and these coolies casually lifted a *dandi* with a person in it and carried it along.

Around eleven a.m. we reached Bodhi. We took shelter in a school building. Having made a fire beside some rocks, we cooked a meal. This has been our routine for the past few days. After lunch we set out again at three p.m.

Garbiyan was only five miles away and we headed for it. As the path was very bad, we had to often get down from our *dandis*. The path had such large undulations that at times our legs were lifted high above our heads and our heads hung low while at other times our heads soared above as our legs dangled down. However, by Ma's grace we had been traversing the route without any mishaps. Sometimes a *dandi* fell, yet no one was hurt.

Bholanath was doing very well—he was not the least bit fatigued. In spite of the difficult terrain that we had crossed, he would sometimes climb to a height, look back and descend to find out about our progress! The hill folk declared, "No one can outdo Baba when it comes to walking!" He was truly enjoying the journey and trekking without tiring. In the past couple of days he had hardly got into his *dandi*. He declared, "I feel inspired!" And so it appeared—I laughed and told him "Our Lord of Kailas, Bholanath, is going to Kailas in great joy!"

As we neared Garbiyan, the scenic beauty became indescribably beautiful. We had no desire to leave the spot. Chhayilek is a spot near Garbiyan. It is a plain dotted with little hills. It seemed as though the Infinite had been personified all around it. Flowers of various hues bloomed and some one commented. "This is a floral garden designed by the Lord of Kailas." We came across snow which had collected here and

there and the water was now biting cold.

A coolie was suddenly bitten by a snake. Two days ago Ma had said, "I can see a black snake on the mountains." This snake was also black. Bholanath and the men with him attended on the coolie earnestly. Ma told the coolie to chew on a certain species of grass. His feet became swollen and he started foaming at the mouth. He was taken up the mountain along with Ma and Bholanath. Till now he has not got any worse.

At Garbiyan we put up at a school as the dak bungalow was full. To proceed from here a big group of people need to go together as the region is infested with dacoits.

As we reached Garbiyan the people who had received prior notice of Ma's arrival came to meet us. Parvati's house was only two and a half miles away and she was to go home. Some *sadhus* arrived to meet Ma. One or two of them were already acquainted with Ma.

The path has now to be covered on horse back or on yak back. We have heard that though the path is not so bad, the atmosphere is so rarefied that it becomes difficult to breathe. This is the reason why the *dandis* will not go any further.

Around one a.m. we slept. A pile of letters were awaiting us here. The post master had them delivered to us. We have decided to halt here for a couple of days.

#### **Saturday, 29 June**

As we did not have to travel today we rose a little late. Some other travellers to Kailas had received news of Ma's arrival and came to see her. A South Indian engineer was accompanying some *sadhus* from the Ramakrishna Mission to Kailas. He brought a big collection of fruits and offered them at Ma's feet. Swami Jnanananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, who had already been to Kailas thrice, was now travelling with Kumar of Dinajpur. Kumar came to meet Ma. The morning was spent thus. A wealthy gentleman called Nandaram Babu, who came to know about Ma's arrival in a letter from his daughter Randra Devi, arrived from Almora. He worshipped Ma and offered flowers and fruits.

All the people conversed about arrangements for our trip to Kailas. The Dinajpur group, the group from South India and another group planned to leave together the day after tomorrow. But they would need fifty five horses which we heard could be procured from the neighbouring jungles. They had still not arrived. We have to take a guide along. Mules and yaks were to carry our luggage and we were to ride on horses. The hire charge per horse was nineteen and a half rupees. Our trip to Kailas and back would take about three weeks. In addition, the horse keeper of each horse was to be paid twelve annas per day. The man accompanying each mule would be

paid eight annas a day and the guide would take twenty five rupees and the cost of a horse. We will have to carry all the food we need for we will not get anything on the way till Takalkot. As no shelter is to be found either, we also have to carry tents. The tents are to be hired; four people can sleep in a tent. We also have to arrange tents for the horse keepers. All the luggage will be carried by mules. The preparations to go to such an inaccessible spot are naturally tedious. Sugar and potatoes are very scarce here and are exorbitantly expensive. Kerosene is ten annas a bottle and rice is as costly as two seers a rupee.

In our anxiety over the preparations of the journey, we hardly had time to think about such minor matters as the cost of items. This was indeed a unique kind of journey. As Ma was having a cold we were to stay on for two more days. Yesterday and the day before had been extremely tedious going, except for Bholanath who was progressing merrily. It is said that on this journey even a father is unable to enquire about his son, but Bholanath was not the least bit fatigued. Instead, the manner in which he was ascending and then descending again to encourage the strugglers seemed to reveal the manifestation of some divine power in him—else it would not be possible for him to exert himself to this extent.

We hear that it is possible to go to Kailas and return in eighteen or nineteen days, but some delay is inevitable and therefore we have to prepare ourselves for a three weeks long span. Here wheat flour is sold at four seers for a rupee and ghee at ten *chatank* for a rupee. The local people are beautifully built. After lunch we all rested. I sat outdoors admiring the scenic beauty all around—Mother Nature seemed to have ornamented Herself. This beauty rouses a lofty emotion in the heart.

There is no shop here but commodities like rice, flour, *dal* and ghee were all available from the residences of the local people. There are absolutely no flies here, but the village is very dirty. We got woollen footwear here—with soles made of string and the upper part reaching up to the knees. Tibetans and Bhutanese walk on ice with such footwear. We purchased a pair each of these footwear.

A *brahmachari* from Dehradun, who was known to us, had joined our group in the Indian Dharchula. On reaching here, he developed fever and chest pain because of the intense cold. We were hearing a variety of reports about the treacherous path ahead. Swami Jnanananda, who had been to Kailas three or four times, recounted the time he fell off his horse in a faint. We also heard many other terrifying stories. However, whatever Ma wills, will happen. We are with her and have no reason to fear. Ma has caught a cold. We all retired early to bed.

### Sunday, 30 June

This morning, Kumar of Dinajpur came to offer *pranama* to Ma. He said, "I am

about to traverse a difficult path. I have, therefore, come for your blessings. You are the Primordial Sakti—please give me the strength to complete this pilgrimage safely. I have heard many terrible tales and so I have come to seek your blessings. We shall leave today." Ma laughed and said, "God alone is to be trusted—He does everything. Whatever has to happen will happen. Repeat your *Ishta mantra* and think of Him as you go on your journey." Kumar said, "Good, I shall do exactly as you say. I was unable to have your *darshan* even though I went to Dhaka. Now, I have your *darshan* in this out of the way place. This is my supreme good fortune. I hope that I shall have the *darshan* of your feet again." He bowed down before Ma and left. The other *sannyasins* who were with him and Jnanananda Swami came to Ma, did *pranama* and took her blessings.

Today they were all to set out—three or four groups together. Our day of departure was decided upon as Tuesday, the day after tomorrow. Ma's cold was worse. She said, "It will be better if you all keep healthy." We felt Ma's indisposition did not forbode good.

The local people gathered to discuss about arrangements for our journey. The beginningless and endless roar of the Ganga still echoed in our ears. Here the river was called Kali Ganga. There was talk of *dandi* being taken along for Ma, or for anyone who may chance to fall ill. The cost of taking a *dandi* to and fro would be one hundred and eighty rupees. In addition, we would have to take a horse and a tent for the coolies who would carry the *dandi*—this is the tradition here.

After lunch, we rested for some time; I spent the afternoon sitting inside a *dandi* which was out in the open. We have travelled one hundred and thirty six miles from Almora. The coolies who came with us from Dharchula had accompanied us till here and then returned. On our return journey also, Rai Bahadur in Dharchula will send us coolies when we write to him. We will not have to keep the coolies waiting here and pay for them. Food is so expensive here, it is difficult for poor people to survive. It is a different story for the natives—they own fields, gardens, cattle, goats and sheep. It is too expensive for outsiders to come and live here and therefore they return ere long.

Tonight, Parvati's mother came to meet us. She brought rice, *dal* and wheat flour with her and also a pair of Tibetan snow shoes for Ma. She had taken a '*Tapovan*' from the Raja of Askote to construct an *ashram*, which she now wished to give to Ma. (Ruma Devi lives there). She had written to the Raja, making this request. Parvati and her mother entreated Ma so earnestly that she agreed to spend one night at their village (the capital of the Raja of Nepal) which was two and a half miles away, before proceeding to Kailas on Wednesday. It was midnight by the time we retired for the night.

(to be continued)

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## MA'S TECHNIQUE OF BESTOWING DIVINE LOVE AND GRACE ON ONE AND ALL

(Taken from *Svakriya Svarasamrita*, Vol-2)

One day at Sultanpur, Sushila Masima put a copper ring on Ma's finger. Shriyukta Mokshada Sundari Devi said, "It will be a great sin if you tell a lie after wearing this ring." Ma replied, "There is never any falsehood here." She (Mokshada Sundari Devi) said, "It would be a sin even to tell a lie unmindfully." Ma replied, "Alright, there will never be any mistake." Even then Mokshada Sundari Devi said, "There is no need to keep this ring at all." Therefore, Ma took it off Her finger and threw it in a nearby pond. Even this was a great pleasure for Her.

Everybody knew that Ma never uttered a lie. Therefore, if anyone wanted to find out the veracity of any statement and if Ma had been present on that occasion. She would be interrogated and Her version accepted as absolute truth. The very basis of *sadhana* is truth. As for Ma, it is so, of course, in Her own *bhava*.

*Strangers and even fallen women as Ma's very own*— The septum of Ma's nose had been pierced and She had been made to wear a nose ring some time back. A hole was also now bored in the nose to wear a nose-pin. The ear-lobes were pierced for wearing ear tops, etc.

At one time, on the occasion of *Durga Puja* Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya Mahasaya, taking Ma with him, set out one afternoon from Kheora for his sister's home in Vikrampur. The journey was performed initially on foot and later by boat. Ma was about seven to eight years old at that time. While moving by boat, they arrived at a spot when it was dusk, and Bhattacharya Mahasaya arranged for Ma to sleep at an acquaintance's place. Later on, he got *puri*<sup>1</sup> and *mohanbhog*<sup>2</sup> to feed Ma. This was perhaps the first time that Ma had tasted *mohanbhog*. The father said (to Ma), "This is *mohanbhog*, eat it with *puris*." Ma ate a little and later, he also had some.

The next day, when they arrived at the (steamer) station in the morning, Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya learnt that the steamer would arrive late. So he decided to buy some provisions for cooking. It was dawn, the sun was up and he was walking

1. *Puri*, an Indian preparation made principally of wheat flour which is first converted into dough and then flattened to round pieces of varying sizes and fried in clarified butter.
2. *Mohanbhog* or *Halva* is a sweet and delicious Indian preparation made from wheat flour, sugar and ghee.



along the bank of the river with Ma. On the way there was a quarter for professional women of easy virtue. Among them an elderly woman came near Ma with great eagerness to talk to Her and touch Her lovingly. It was a strange feeling! Father was walking ahead, the daughter close behind. Ma too was as if one of their own and suddenly stopped on the way. "What is your name, where are you going, will you eat something?"—in various such expressions conveying intense love, that woman continued talking, standing there only. And (all this was) with such a feeling, indeed, as if Ma was so much of her own, and if she could, she would have taken Ma to her home. Ma uttered Her name, refused to eat anything and said She was going to Her aunt's house with Her father. Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya Mahasaya was buying something from a shop close by and was not careful about Ma for a while. Afterwards, he asked Ma, "Why are you standing there? Come here, let us proceed", and took Her with him.

(How can we know) what traits of character anyone has? Attempt should be made to understand Ma's ways. She alone knew what transpired, what She bestowed in Her dealing with a stranger. She came across on the road. But, while moving away, as far as one could see, that woman had her eye fixed on Ma. She felt hurt that Ma was leaving, as if someone very close was going away! All this came also to the notice of Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya. The steamer arrived on time and it was noticed that the woman had come again and was standing near Ma, a little away with a forlorn face. It was clear that she had come only to see Ma. With a sad feeling, she enquired of Ma, "Are you going away now itself?" Ma replied in the affirmative with a little smile. Meanwhile, Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya, holding Ma's hand, took Her aboard the steamer. When Ma boarded it, that woman felt extremely unhappy, and standing there with that feeling, went on looking at the steamer so long as she could see it.

The steamer reached the destination. The house of Ma's aunt was at some distance from that place and one had to cover a part of it on foot. It was dusk, darkness was approaching, and as they walked on, at quite a distance a big fire was seen. They were walking and Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya Mahasaya, while moving in the dark, kept on talking a little to Ma. "Certainly, it is a strain to walk, but the house now is close by"—he was speaking in such a vein. Pointing towards the fire, Ma told Her father, "Father, what must be the condition of the inmates of the house which is on fire?" So saying She kept quiet and stood staring at the fire. Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya Mahasaya asked Ma. "Why have you stopped? Let us proceed." Walking along, Ma told Her father, "Look, look father, the fire is getting extinguished!" He said, "Yes it is really so; such a big fire being put out so fast!"

On deciding to spend the night (somewhere), Shriyukt Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya went to a family residence near by, with the head of which he was already on intimate terms. *Durga Puja* was being celebrated there. The ladies of the house shouted in joy. "We have the goddess *Durga*. Herself amongst us." They were so happy to have Ma that they started picking up and holding Her joyfully in their arms. What did they see? What did they get and what did they understand which gave them such a feeling? They did not know how to express their love and affection for Her. They called their neighbours and showed Ma to them. Responding to their feelings, Ma also became just one of them and did not spend that night with Her father. The next morning they bade Ma farewell with a very heavy heart after dressing Her up in new clothes. No one knows as to what all was awakened in their minds.

The next day Shriyukt Bipin Bihar Bhattacharya Mahasaya and Ma reached Tantar, his sister's residence. They were also celebrating *Durga Puja*, and were very pleased to have Ma among them. Three closely related aunts of Ma lived in that village. Two other aunts, distantly related, lived next door. Ma was taken round the village from one end to another and was picked up in arms with joy by the relations. Here also Ma made everyone happily enthusiastic. With all the children of the family, this was how Ma was there. As for Ma Herself, whatever Her nature was, the same was there at the houses of Her aunts too.

*Practical Joke recoils on the Joker : Ma's Kheyala* — Just to outwit Ma, one of Her cousins brought a piece of cinnamon from the house and another (similar looking) piece of bark of a tree from somewhere. Her intention was to give the ordinary bark to Ma and eat the cinnamon herself, as is done in a play. It was seen, however, (to her discomfiture) that the piece Ma had in Her mouth was cinnamon, while the one which the cousin had herself was the ordinary bark. What actually happened and how, only the One who had brought it about knew! Later, when the aunt heard about it, she reprimanded her daughter much. The girl also promised that she would never do it again. Minor incidents like this often took place even during play, but the bond of love with everybody remained unimpaired.

*No Kheyala for Food, Clothing, etc., but Polluted Food not Acceptable*— Ma never complained or bothered about food and clothing as well as any other thing that was available any time. Both the mother and father felt specially attracted towards Ma. When father went out somewhere, he would ask Ma, "What shall I bring for you?" Many a time he would be quite insistent. Occasionally, because of his insistence, Ma would say, "You may bring whatever you like," while at other times She would remain absolutely silent, as if She had nothing at all to say. Sometimes when peddlers selling their wares, such as bangles and anklets, came to the locality, chil-

dren ran about and pestered their parents with all sorts of demands. But Ma never had any *Kheyala* for such things.

Never, on any day, did the words, 'I am hungry' come out of Ma's mouth. She had to be called and fed during meal times. Others ask for varieties of eatables from their mothers, but Ma never had such a tendency. Imitating children of the same age-group, Ma once asked Her mother, "Please give me something to eat." She replied, "Help yourself, the food is there." Ma was not accustomed to taking anything Herself. In spite of that, because of mother's instructions, She kept going that side and coming back. When the mother saw Her doing this twice or thrice, she came and served food to Ma herself.

It is said that Ma could not stand (digest) the food which had become polluted or was served by someone who violated the customary rules of diet. Shriyukta Mokshada Sundari Devi would say that if anything like this happened, Ma would suffer from some kind of illness, may be even a little. That was why Ma had to be looked after carefully. In the context of such topics with neighbours, some among them would tell Mokshada Sundari Devi. "Yes, some children cannot stand violation of the established practice in regard to food and drink."

(an excerpt)

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The remembrance of God must be with a human being day and night so that he may be cleansed of his shortcomings and errors.

—Shree Shree Ma

## "JANGALA ME MANGALA KARANI"

Vindhyachala, January 1943\*

—Dr. Bithika Mukerji

Sri Ma arrived at the hill-top ashram at Vindhyachala on January 5, 1943. It so happened that many distinctive events took place during the following weeks. Firstly, Sri Ma's residence in the ashram attracted visitors from all nearby towns. The evenings saw groups of devotees from Mirzapur, Varanasi and Allahabad clustering round Sri Ma. One of the local ladies, whose husband being a political agitator was behind bars at this time, was in rebellious mood. She said, "Ma, why should anyone pray to God?"

"Because prayers establish a relationship with Him. It helps in the attainment of the goal which is to find Him in your life."

"I do not feel at all that I want anything to do with God."

"Look, before you were married, you had no feeling for your husband. Now that you know him well, you are concerned and are thinking of him constantly. So establish a relationship with God first. Prayers are for that. Once contact is established, then you will feel an involvement. This is to be cultivated to a greater degree.

"The husband you are concerned about has been a source of happiness for you and now he is a source of sorrow. But the Supreme Lord is ever a source of bliss; never does He forsake you once you know Him for what He is. I am not asking you to forget your concerns; it is right you should worry about your husband. But if you learn to pray it may become a supportive way of life."

It was in Vindhyachala ashram at this time that Sri Ma was seen to perform beautiful 'yogic kriyas' for a prolonged period of time almost more than two hours. Her movements were smooth, graceful and perfect in their interlocking positions. Her breath was synchronised to the movements of her body and limbs. There was radiance on her face and she seemed to be within an aura of effulgence altogether awe-inspiring.

There were five young women in her room, when Sri Ma entered in this transcendental state. As written before, the lines of demarcation between her various states of awareness were very tenuous. She would be with her audience quite normally; in one moment she would be transformed and apparently in some other

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\*. An extract from the manuscript of Bithika Mukerjee given by Christopher Pegler. London.

dimension of existence; but her return to her audience was as natural as her withdrawal. When asked about this phenomenon, Sri Ma had said once, "It is you who are describing the various stages of this body. I am always as I am."

One of the five witnesses (Sidhu, Renu, Buni, Udas and Kshama) of this phenomenon was Sidhu, the elder sister of Kauna, the girl who had died in Raipur a couple of months earlier. Sri Ma was very kind to her. The time was approaching for the annual puja of the Goddess of learning, Saraswati Devi. Sidhu happened to say, "How nice it would be if we could perform this puja near Ma at this time." Sri Ma had the Kheyala to grant her wish. It was as if a magic wand had been waved. The lonely rather inaccessible ashram became a place of festivity almost overnight. The Image of the Goddess was brought from Varanasi. By a coincidence, Atul Thakur, a well known savant, arrived to visit Sri Ma. He agreed to perform the puja. Other arrangements happened smoothly. A large congregation witnessed the invocation and worship of the Goddess of learning. Truly, one of Sri Ma's titles "*jangala me mangala karani*" (Onewho transforms desolation into auspicious celebration) was well deserved.

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### LIST OF FESTIVALS

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|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Maghi Purnima                              | — | 14th February 2014          |
| 2. Shree Shree Vasanti<br>Durga Puja          | — | April 5th to 9th April 2014 |
| 3. Shree Ram Navami                           | — | 9th April 2014              |
| 4. Swami Muktananda<br>Giriji's Sannyas Utsav | — | 14th April 2014             |
| 5. Shree Shree Ma's Janmotsav                 | — | 3rd May to 20th May 2014    |